

As I said the other night, I have some knowledge of international affairs, particularly in the Pacific area. When I travelled west to British Columbia for the purpose of setting in motion this policy of moving the Japanese from the protected areas, I say frankly that in view of the situation at Pearl Harbor, in India, Australia, the Straits Settlements, Hong Kong, and the Dutch East Indies, I did not feel a very happy man. The news of course was of a character which I had to keep to myself. Nevertheless we set about the removal of these people. I think it was the hon. member for Vancouver East who said that possibly it would have been better if we had chosen a concentration place other than Hastings Park, but when I got off the plane and looked the situation over, that appeared to me to be the most satisfactory place to use as a dispersal point for these people.

I say, as I said last year, that it is not going to be said about me or my department while I am in charge of the policy of handling Japanese people that we will depart one iota from the kind of treatment of human beings that characterizes the British people and has given them the reputation they enjoy in the world. Let that be clearly understood.

The hon. member for Vancouver East made some constructive suggestions, particularly in connection with education. I say to him that there was no racial prejudice as far as the labour department was concerned in the removal of the Japanese. We moved that number in the manner we did on account of concentration of the Japanese in the protected areas. So far as my department was concerned, no racial prejudice entered into the question at all. At this point, in view of the fact that the British Columbia security commission has finished its labours, and now that the matter comes squarely under the jurisdiction of my department, may I give my personal thanks to the members of the commission for having undertaken a very difficult task. I have found, as I suppose other hon. members have found, that when you have a very difficult task it is sometimes not the easiest thing in the world to assume responsibility. But when the undertaking is completed, criticism is sometimes voiced about mistakes that have been made in the process of execution. So that I pay a tribute to Mr Taylor, Mr. John Shirras of the provincial police, assistant commissioner F. J. Mead of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and Doctor Hodgins, who was and still is in charge of the medical services to the Japanese people, as well as to the advisory committee, who represented a good cross-section of all political parties and interests in British Columbia.

[Mr. Mitchell.]

Do not forget that to tear up by the roots a community equivalent to a fair-sized city like Guelph was no mean undertaking. We had to provide hospital accommodation, housing and schooling for those people, and all those health measures that are necessary in what we may term a civilized community, and I think it is to the credit of the people responsible that there have been no epidemics among the Japanese. There have been investigations by representatives of the Japanese government, through the Spanish consul in Canada, of the settlements that we have instituted and the policies that we have pursued, and I am glad to say that the representative of the Japanese was completely satisfied, as was the representative of the International Red Cross in Geneva, with the treatment which we have given these people, who at the moment, to all intents and purposes, are wards of the state. I hope that when the war is over and the story is told of our own flesh and blood who are at the moment prisoners of the Japanese, the same thing may be said of the Japanese government with regard to their treatment of our kith and kin who are at present prisoners in their hands.

Something has been said about the expense of the movement. I should like to compare our operations with those of the United States. They had about 110,599 to move to camps. It is true, as one hon. gentleman said, I forget who, that about 5,000 Japanese Americans are in the United States army. The estimated expenditure for a year of the United States government is \$70,000,000 for that 110,000 Japanese, and that works out on a per capita basis of roughly \$600. The expenditure in the past year by this department for the movement of our Japanese works out at \$173.05 per capita. In that connection the economical operation by ourselves was not at the expense of the Japanese. We endeavoured to have a policy whereby from the outset as many Japanese as possible would be self-supporting. We felt, and I still feel personally, that the policy of dispersal is far better than the policy of concentration, and I understand, from advices from our good friends to the south, that they intend to follow a similar policy in that country. I think it is far better to have the grown-up Japanese go to work in a productive way and in turn to support their wives and families than to have them live in idleness in camps, and accordingly we have seen a movement east from British Columbia into other provinces. We see a movement into Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec.

I think it is fair to say that in considerable part the fact that we can have the amount of sugar that we have at the moment